2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
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585 a son who will grow up strong and big and be a good hunter and a valiant man.

In the meantime the meat of the slaughtered animals has been cooking. When it is ready, everybody joins in the feast, the men and the women, however, eating apart. The only exception is in the case of the bridegroom, who eats sitting together with the women—but out of a separate pot and of meat specially set aside for him. [274] After the feast dagga is smoked, a pipe being passed round out of which every person inhales a few times before handing it on. This smoking bout, which owing to the nature of the herb soon degenerates into a noisy and drunken orgy, is kept up till late at night, when they are all tired and stupefied, and turn in to sleep. The bridegroom now sleeps for the first time with his wife. The festivities are continued on the following day, as long as there is still anything to eat. Dancing, according to Kolb, never takes place at the marriage ceremony, but on this point he is contradicted by most of the other writers.

Married Life

As will have been noted, the descriptions given above vary somewhat in certain details. They all agree, however, in stating that the marriage is celebrated by a special ceremony at the home of the wife's people, accompanied by a feast and general rejoicing. With the conclusion of this ceremony, which as it were stamps the seal of public approval upon the marriage contract, the young couple are legally married. Henceforth they form a separate household in the community, live in their own hut, have their own herd of cattle, sheep and goats, and in general play the part of full adult members of society.

991 Among the Namas, however, the husband continues to live with his wife at the home of her parents for at least a year after the marriage, 606 and not till then, or until his first child has been born, is he at liberty to return with his family to his own people's camp and there establish his independent household. Before departing he has again to present to his mother-in-law a good milch cow, this time in token of his release. As long as he remains with his parents-in-law he has to perform all sorts of heavy tasks for them, and to accompany his father-in-law in the hunting field as well as to war. Sometimes, as we have already mentioned, the husband may remain permanently with his wife's people. As a rule, however, this matrilocal residence is

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only temporary, and nowadays the period of its duration is often shortened to only a few weeks or even days. On the return of the man to his own people, his mother is required to slaughter an animal as a sign of welcome to his wife, who then reciprocates the gesture in the same way. Neglect on the part of the mother-in-law to provide this welcome is regarded as implying unfriendliness towards the young wife.[1]

The status of the wife in Hottentot society is far from being that of an inferior. Although as a rule she plays a subordinate rôle in matters pertaining to tribal life, and in public always walks several paces behind her husband, yet her position in the household is supreme, and the education of the children is wholly in her hands. She is regarded as the mistress of the hut, which she brings with her at marriage, and of all its contents. She even has the right in certain circumstances to forbid her husband to enter it. She has her own property in cattle, some given to her by her parents while she was still a child, others when she was married, and her husband will not venture to sell or slaughter an animal belonging to her without her consent or in her absence. Even if he intends to barter his own stock he usually first consults her, and during his absence she also controls the pasturing of the herds. She supervises or herself does the milking which provides the household with most of its food, and controls all the provisions, allotting to each his food according to status and age, and brooking no contradiction. Her husband may not even take a mouthful of milk without first obtaining her permission, and should he do so, says Hahn, his nearest female relatives will put a fine on him, consisting in cows and sheep, which are to be added to the stock of his wife.[2]

All the Hottentot tribes formerly permitted polygamy. It seems, however, to have been practised to only a slight extent, and as a rule only the more powerful and wealthy men appear to have had more than one wife. In any case the number of wives seldom exceeded two or three. Each wife had her own hut, in which she lived with her children, and had also her own property. The first wife married, however, was the chief wife, and took unlimited precedence. Her

[1] Hahn, *Tsuni-||Goam*, 18; Wuttke, "Die Khoi-Khoin oder Nama," 318; Kohler, "Das Recht der Hottentotten," 343–4; von François, *Nama und Damara*, 214; Schultze, *Hottentot and Kaffirland*, 197, 510; Vedder, *Eingeborenenrecht*, 18.

[2] Kolb, op. cit., 98; Hahn, op. cit., 19; Schultze, op. cit., 199; Schinz, op. cit., 82; Wuttke, "Unter den Buschmannsleuten . . . der Hottentotten," 779; Olpp, *Angra Pequena*, 35–6; *Reports on the Natives of South-West Africa and their Treatment by Germany* (Cmd. 91-1918), 77.

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And Wikar, as far back as 1778, described what almost seems to have been a form of wife exchange among the Little Namaqua tribes. A married man, he says, will come at night into the hut of another, and lie down next to the latter's wife; whereupon the husband gets up to make room for him, and goes to sleep in another part of the hut. The following night this process is reversed, but, as Wikar delightfully adds, if the wife of the man who first initiated it is ugly, the affair is soon ended ("maar is de vrouw van diegene die 't spel eerst begonnen heeft leelijk, dan wil 't nog niet braaf lukken met deese handel") ! This form of intercourse is naturally of quite a different order from adultery, for although it is an encroachment upon the husband's sexual prerogative over his wife, it takes place with his full agreement, and he himself obtains a reciprocal liberty. It appears from Wikar's description that the relationship is formally agreed upon by the two husbands, for he speaks of it as being accompanied by slaughtering and rejoicing, but it is not clear if we have anything here in the nature of the *sore* relationship.[1] In any case it is a good illustration of the freedom of sexual life among the Hottentots. A similar instance is mentioned by Alexander: "If a Hottentot has been out hunting and on his return finds his place occupied, he sits down at the door of his hut, and the paramour handing him out a bit of tobacco, the injured man contentedly smokes it till the latter chooses to retire."[2] This statement one would certainly question were it not compatible with the description just quoted from Wikar, who is on the whole so accurate an observer that there is no good reason for rejecting his evidence on this particular point.

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The only ground for divorce is ill-treatment, which has to be proved to the satisfaction of the tribal council, in whose hands the decision lies. A wife deserting her husband is forced to return to him, and similarly a husband abandoning his wife is requested to return to her. Should he refuse or neglect to do so, his property is taken from him and handed over to her.[3]

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Marriage, in addition to establishing the household with all its accompanying social, economic, and legal functions, also creates social observances of a special type with regard to the relatives-in-law. A man not only lives, as we have seen, with his parents-in-law for some time after his marriage, during which he has to render them

[1] Op. cit., 1779.
[2] *Expedition of Discovery into the Interior of Africa*, I, 156. Cf. also Thunberg, *Travels in Europe, Africa, and Asia*, II, 40, 64-5.
[3] Kolben, op. cit., pp. 210

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606 various services. He also has to treat his wife's mother with t
greatest deference. They are said to be "shy", *ama*, of each oth
and he may never look at her when addressing her. In the presen
607 of his wife's brothers also he has to be restrained; he may not, e.
587 be quarrelsome, nor may he beat his children and cause them to c
To his wife's sisters, however, he behaves, according to Mrs. Hoern
"much as he would to his wife, and even at the present day inte
course with them is common, if they are unmarried or widowed
A woman, again, "considered her husband's younger brothers
her husbands, and used in the old days to be inherited by one of them
Even now it is customary that after the death of a man his broth
takes the widow into his hut, unless she already has grown-up so
and is sufficiently well-to-do to manage her household witho
assistance.[1]

Remarriage Ceremonies

587 The survivor of a marriage, whether man or woman, is n
permitted to remarry until at least a full year has elapsed since th
death of the other partner.[2] At the new marriage ceremony, whethe
a widow marries a young man, a widower a young woman, or eve
a widow a widower, great ritual precautions are necessary, and a
elaborate ceremonial is performed. The details of this custom hav
been carefully recorded by Mrs. Hoernlé.[3]

587 Following upon the regular marriage feast, she says, a specia
783 remarriage feast is held. For this a special animal is killed, if possibl
794 a sheep, otherwise a goat. The bride and bridegroom enter the new
hut specially built for them, seat themselves on a skin on the floo
and await proceedings. They are now in the peculiar state known
to the Hottentots as */nam*, during which they are not only themselve
in an extremely precarious condition, but are also a source of dange
to all other people who have not undergone the same ceremony.
Great harm might easily come to them, so that the people of their cla
(*sic*) see to it that no one dangerous enters the hut; still less would

[1] Hoernlé, op. cit., 15; Schreiner, op. cit., part 25; Rudner, op. cit., 340. The ceremonies o
the Hottentots among the Namaqua was noted as far back as 1661 by Ruiter and Munnik, who stated
that if a man died, leaving behind him a wife and children, it is the duty of his eldest surviving
brother to take the woman to wife and to bring up her children as his own; but if she has
sufficient means to support herself and her children, the brother has the right to decide whether
he takes her or not. ("Rapport van den . . . Hoere Rijk Tulbagh," 15.)

[2] Rudner, op. cit., 340.

[3] "Certain Rites of Transition and the Conception of Sex among the Hottentots," *Harvard African Studies*, I (1918), 55-9.

4: Hoernlé E-5 (1912-1913) 1925
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thing at his maternal uncle's *//Hâis*, or home, without being blamed for it. He could take, without asking, any of the specially fine animals among his uncle's herds, and the uncle had no redress but to take misformed ugly animals from his nephew's herds. This exchange was called *//aeri //as*, and it is still practiced by the Nama to-day.

The only other relationship calling for special notice is that of a man to his relatives by marriage. To his wife's sisters, a man behaved much as he would to his wife, and even at the present day intercourse with them is common, if they are unmarried or widowed. Such relations are the cause of much trouble. A woman considered her husband's younger brothers as her husbands, and used in the old days to be inherited by one of them. In the early missionary records there are numerous instances of a younger brother taking over his elder brother's widow.[2] This practice is, of course, strongly condemned by the missionaries who report these things, and it is interesting to note that the women seem to have taken advantage of the objection on the part of the missionaries to avoid this relationship in some instances.

His wife's mother had always to be treated with the greatest deference by a husband. They were said to be "shy" of one another, and the man might never look at her when speaking to her. There used in the past to be a special form of address between all relatives-in-law, the formal "You" being applied both to the mother-in-law, to the brothers of a man's wife, and to her father, but it is not so used nowadays.

In addition to the strict prohibition against marriage in the elli, a man was not allowed to marry a woman of the same great name as himself, even though she might come from a tribe different from his own. Such a woman would be regarded either as a mother if much older, or as a daughter if younger than the man. Nowadays, this prohibition, too, has ceased to be observed. I have instances in the genealogies, though not many, of such marriages having taken place.

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[2] Cf. Rhenish Mission Berichte, 1836, p. 321; also same Berichte, 1860, p. 21.